

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 13, 2006

The Emergency Management Advisory Council held its regular meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 2006 at 8:00 A.M. in the Tippecanoe Room in the County Office Building. Advisory Council Members present were: Chairman Jimmie Kesterson, Vice Chairman Nathan Miller, Mike Kyger, Dave Reagan, Carol Shelby, Garry Smith, John Walker, John Withers, County Councilmember Ronald L. Fruitt, and Commissioner Ruth E. Shedd. Also present: Director Mark Kirby, Deputy Director Tim Batta, Attorney David W. Luhman, and Secretary Pauline E. Rohr.

Chairman Jimmie Kesterson called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Councilmember Fruitt moved to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2006 Meeting as distributed, seconded by Ms Shelby; motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Referring to a recent Journal & Courier editorial, Chairman Kesterson stated he doesn't think the general population understands when and why the warning sirens are activated. As a result, he asked Director Kirby to develop Protocols for activating the sirens. He commented that Homeland Security funds are available for "early warning" sirens but not for "tornado" sirens. In response to the Chairman's request, Director Kirby distributed a draft of Community Warning Protocols.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Kirby distributed a printout of Homeland Security's expectations for local EMAs regarding the anticipated Pandemic Flu outbreak. It says "County EMAs are NOT responsible for developing, directing or controlling the local public health/medical plans or the public health response. The county EMA mission is to ensure that the local 'health' and other discipline plans are coordinated and compliment one another to support the local and the state response."

Director Kirby announced he was subpoenaed to testify in the trial of former TEMA Director Steve Wettschurack in Benton County this week unless there is a plea agreement.

Notification was received that TEMA qualified for 2005 grants totaling \$683,847. The emphasis for spending the money will be on training preparation and not equipment purchases. Participating entities will meet to decide how the money will be used.

Deputy Director Batta distributed a list he generated of siren locations that indicated if they are on private or public property, the power source, and the type of access. He explained he may have given a siren a high risk rating because of a questionable power source or poor accessibility. When compiling the list, Deputy Director Batta said he shot a GPS location of all the sirens. However, since that time, the siren located at Otterbein has been relinquished to Benton County due to their complaints regarding the siren's activation when no severe weather was exhibited in that area. Director Kirby interjected that the Town of Otterbein had purchased that siren.

Attorney Luhman asked if the County is billed by Tipmont for electricity to sirens located in the County right-of-way. Director Kirby said Tipmont bills the County for all sirens on one bill (est \$240/mo) except one siren that is billed separately (est \$15/mo) but Duke (fka Cinergy) does not charge the County. Some owners pay the electricity for sirens located on private property which the Director thinks is a concern. Director Kirby reported he submitted a capital outlay request of \$70,000 for sirens for 2007 to try to address some of these issues.

Chairman Kesterson asked the Communications Committee to make recommendations for getting the sirens off private property.

The volunteers are ready to file their paperwork with the State for 501c3 status.

A complete inventory of TEMA equipment will be presented at next month's meeting.

CHRISTOPHER BURKE PRESENTATION: Sheila McKinley

In February 2006, TEMA hired Christopher B. Burge Engineering, Ltd. to facilitate meetings with the TEMA Staff, Advisory Council, Emergency Management Officers, Hazardous Materials Response Team, and Volunteers to make recommendations to improve the TEMA organization. Following is a summary of their findings:

1. Purpose of TEMA: For Public Understanding

Recommendation 1A - Volunteers could do more education and outreach to increase awareness and exposure of the TEMA. To be successful, this needs to be coordinated with the on-going efforts of the Director and Advisory Council.

2. Organization of TEMA: IC 10-4-1-10

The Statute provides some guidance. Much of the organization and structure is defined at the local level based on local needs and expertise.

Recommendation 2A - Remove the line from the Board of Commissioners to the Advisory Council to the Director and move the Advisory Council in line with the Director (and connected only to the Director) or in a triangle with the Commissioners and Director.

Recommendation 2B: Move the Assistant Deputy Director under the Deputy Director.

Recommendation 2C - Add Captain, Lieutenant, and Squad levels to existing Chain of Command.

Recommendation 2D - Create a comprehensive organization chart for TEMA that illustrates the relationship of all entities including the Advisory Council, Staff, Officers, Hazardous Materials Response Team, Volunteers, as well as the community-based programs Citizens Corp, CERT, VIPS, Fire Corps, etc.

Recommendation 2E - Create two charts, one chart to illustrate the entire TEMA organization and a second chart to define TEMA operations.

3. Role of [entity] According to the Statute:

“The Advisory Council role is to ‘exercise general supervision and control over the emergency management and disaster program of the county’. The Director ‘shall have direct responsibility for the organization, administration, and operation of the emergency management program in the county and shall be responsible to the chairman of the emergency management advisory council’”.

Recommendation 3A – Conduct quarterly or bi-annual Advisory Board meetings as opposed to monthly meetings.

Recommendation 3B – Advisory Council should lobby State Legislatures to better define the role and authority of emergency management members.

Recommendation 3C – Advisory Council should lobby State Legislatures to provide employment protection to volunteers assisting with response and recovery efforts.

Recommendation 3D – Advisory Council members should attend regularly scheduled Officer, Hazardous Material Response Team, and volunteer meetings, training sessions, and mock training exercises.

Recommendation 3E – Conduct an annual TEMA general membership meeting for TEMA staff, Advisory Council, Officers, Hazardous Material Response Team, and Volunteers. This could be an opportunity for the Director to share achievements and vision for the organization and for Advisory Council members to acknowledge the members and express their appreciation.

4. Responsibility of [entity]

The four disciplines of emergency management include preparedness, response, recover, and mitigation.

Recommendation 4A – Advisory Council should use their personal and professional influence to increase the awareness of local emergency management efforts and champion for local needs including funding, equipment, and training.

Recommendation 4B – Involve the Volunteers in outreach and education efforts. These efforts need to be coordinated with the efforts of the Director and Administrative Assistant.

Recommendation 4C – Increase involvement in recovery and mitigation efforts.

Recommendation 4D – Improve preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts by learning from the experiences of other emergency management agencies.

CONCLUSION

Based on only a brief one to two hour conversation with the TEMA Staff, Advisory Council, Officers, hazardous Material Response Team, and Volunteers, it is evident that the TEMA is a good organization with strong leadership, good resources, and most importantly dedicated and talented staff and volunteers.

The most significant recommendation from these discussions is the role and responsibility of the Advisory Council. The overall sense from the membership was that the Advisory Council may be spending too much time on day-to-day activities of the TEMA and should use their community status, influence, and expertise to support, protect, and acknowledge the efforts of the Officers, Hazardous Material Response Team, and Volunteers.

SIREN TEST: Director Mark Kirby

There were no failures during the monthly siren test held on Saturday, June 3, 2006. The replacement of the Wainwright siren and the removal of the siren located on private property in Romney have not been accomplished due to wet ground conditions.

← Advisory Council Member John Walker left the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Director Kirby requested the Advisory Council's input by next month's meeting on the Protocols so the finished document will be available by August. Chairman Kesterson requested a meeting with the Director and other interested Advisory Council members this week regarding the Protocols so citizens and media will have knowledge of why the sirens are activated and what to do. Ms Shelby asked Chairman Kesterson to postpone that meeting until next week so she can present the proposed Protocols to the LEPC for their input this Friday.

Councilmember Fruitt asked which media are notified in an emergency. Director Kirby responded the two primary contacts are WLFI TV and WASK Radio.

Commissioner Shedd asked if TEMA plans to hand out information at the County 4-H Fair. Mr. Reagan said they have handouts but they are old. Chairman Kesterson said he is not sure if the Protocols will be ready for distribution by that time. He asked Director Kirby to investigate if grant money can be spent for a mass mailing or magnets that contain emergency information. He doesn't think TEMA is ready to advise people where they should go if there is an emergency while they are attending the Fair.

Director Kirby announced he has been invited for monthly question & answer interviews at WBAA Radio on the 4th Thursday at 2:00 P.M. Chairman Kesterson said he thinks this is a great forum but the Protocols need to be finalized before providing answers that may have to be retracted later.

In response to a request from Chairman Kesterson to learn the cost of a mass mailing, Mr. Smith reported the estimated cost from M.A.I.L. to send postcards to 64,043 addresses in Tippecanoe County is \$4,582.06 plus postage. Postage is cheaper for a non-profit entity but he was not certain if the County has non-profit status. Mr. Reagan pointed out this could be done by the Volunteers after they attain 501c3 status.

Mr. Smith thinks the misconceptions about warning sirens that were recently stated in the Editorial on the Opinions page in the Journal & Courier are indicative of what happens in the general population. He said statistics show that the population turns over every seven years, and he understands the person who wrote the Editorial is fairly new to the community. Mr. Smith said the sirens have not been called "tornado" sirens since he has been on the Advisory Council.

Chairman Kesterson asked if the Advisory Council should respond to the Editorial. Mr. Smith reported that the Journal & Courier is interested in meeting with Director Kirby in preparation for an article on warning sirens. Ms Shelby stated the factual response about what to do when the sirens are activated should come from the Director, not the Advisory Council.

Mr. Reagan reported he attended the CERT training at the Fairgrounds last month as an observer and said the TEMA people did an excellent job. Although the participants had previously been trained, he said they encountered setbacks in the exercise that could be experienced during a real incident. He recommended attendance by Advisory Council members at future training exercises.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the TEMA Advisory Council will be held at 8:00 A.M., Tuesday, July 11, 2006 in the Tippecanoe Room in the County Office Building.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Smith moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Fruitt; motion carried.

Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor